

City of Carlsbad's Proposed RV Ordinance Questions & Answers

Why is the City Council considering restricting overnight parking by recreational and oversized vehicles?

Recreational and oversized vehicle parking on city streets has grown as a more significant concern among many residents, visitors and business owners in the City of Carlsbad. The City of Carlsbad Police Department has few existing laws to address many of the complaints they receive regarding recreational and oversized vehicles. Many occupants of RVs do not cooperate with police officers who attempt to enforce existing no-camping rules. In other cases RV owners are having a negative effect on their neighborhood by parking for too long, storing their RV on public streets or blocking sight distance at driveways and intersections. Police lack tools to cite RV owners who shift their vehicles around a neighborhood, impacting others because the RV is not properly stored on private property. As a result of these complaints and concerns, the City Council directed city staff to draft a new citywide ordinance that would restrict overnight parking of RVs within the City of Carlsbad between the hours of 2 a.m. and 5 a.m.

What types of complaints has the City of Carlsbad received regarding RVs?

The city realizes most people who own and use RVs are law abiding and wants RV users to enjoy the city during the day. Complaints are largely focused on quality of life and health and safety issues. They include illegal dumping (trash and sewage), traffic hazards, blight and reduced driver visibility. Many crime reports are also generated from areas where RVs are parked overnight.

I own an RV. Will this ordinance keep me from parking in front of my house when I need to?

No. The ordinance has exceptions for RV owners who live in Carlsbad and their visitors. Residents may apply for a free yearly permit that would allow them to park their oversized vehicle on a public street at their residence for up to 72 hours, giving them time to load and unload their vehicle before and after a trip. To reduce impacts on neighbors, residents would be limited to four such three-day allowances within a 30-day period, with a minimum 24 hours between occurrences.

What about permits for out-of-town guests?

Residents could also apply for a temporary permit to allow a guest to park an RV on a public street in front of their residence, or as close as legally possible within 400 feet of the residence. This free permit would allow a specific RV to park at the residence for up to three consecutive nights, with a minimum 24 hours between occurrences.

What would the permit cost?

The permit is free. Permit holders who violate the terms of the permit would risk losing the permit, receiving a citation and having their vehicle towed.

What about out-of-town visitors who stay at a local hotel or motel?

Hotels or motels could allow guests to park RVs on public streets next to these inns if the RV cannot be accommodated in the property's parking lot. The city would issue each hotel and motel reusable permits that they can give to guests. The RV owners could use the permit only while they are paying guests of the hotel or motel.

Have other cities enacted similar limits on overnight parking by RVs?

Yes. Many other California coastal cities have restrictions on overnight parking by RVs.